

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

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AIRGRAM

038-0475

HANDLING	CLASSIFICATION UNCLASSIFIED	MESSAGE REFERENCE NO. A-0543
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TO: ALL DIPLOMATIC AND CONSULAR POSTS AND ICA AND AID OVERSEAS ESTABLISHMENTS

FROM: Department of State (DGP/PER)

DATE:

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: APER, AFSP

1980 MAR 17 PM 3:39

SUBJECT: Temporary Grade Retention for FSNs

REF: A-1025 of April 2, 1979

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The purpose of this airgram is to announce formally an interagency policy of grade retention for FSNs. Grade retention is a system in which the incumbent of a position which is downgraded is entitled to retain temporarily the former grade of his/her position. This policy is designed to maintain temporarily an employee's previous pay entitlements, and to provide a reasonable period during which the post and the employee can attempt to alleviate the personal effects of the downgrading action. Downgrading may be avoided in some cases by reorganizing work assignments, promotion to a vacant position in the same or another functional category, the attainment of retirement age, etc.

Set forth below are the rules governing grade retention for FSNs:

1. Grade retention will be offered at the present time only when the new position classification standards system is applied at a post for the first time. 3 FAM 954.3-2 will be amended soonest to provide grade retention provisions in the case of demotions effected at times other than the initial application of the new standards.

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DRAFTED BY: ER/ER/FN - W. Hibbs:ch	DRAFTING DATE 2/29/80	PHONE NO. 20966	CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: DGP/PER - R. S. Gershenson
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REMARKS:

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2. The grade retention period will be 52 pay periods from the date the new position classification system is or was effected at each mission. Under exceptional circumstances, grade retention of 78 pay periods may be authorized. (The 78 pay period grade retention provision will not be a feature of the amendment in 3 FAM 954.3-2 mentioned above.) Requests for 78 pay period grade retention should include full justification of the need. Requests should be submitted for approval immediately after the classification survey is completed to the appropriate regional bureau executive office in the Department with copies to PER/ER/FN and other affected headquarters agencies.

3. Whenever the new standards are applied at a post for the first time from now on, grade retention provisions will apply. Those posts which were not authorized grade retention at the time the new standards were applied will not be permitted to offer the benefit now. Those posts at which grade retention was authorized at the time the new standards were applied will be entitled to grade retention of 52 pay periods from the date of the original implementation of the classification survey results. Requests from this latter group of posts for grade retention of 78 pay periods should be submitted to Washington in accordance with instructions set forth in Para 2 above, within 30 days of the date of this message.

4. During the grade retention period, an FSN in grade retention status will receive the full amount of any general wage increases and any periodic step increases otherwise due, unless the employee is in a "saved pay" status at the time of the grade retention action. Such "saved pay" cases will continue to be handled as set forth in 3 FAM 932.6a(4).

5. Upon expiration of the grade retention period, the employee's salary, if he occupies the same position previously designated for downgrading, will be converted to a rate at the appropriate lower level of the position under provisions set forth in 3 FAM 954.3-2. Under this regulation "saved pay" provisions also apply when appropriate.

6. Personnel action documents should show the incumbent's position title at the proper lower level and the grade and step at the GR level with appropriate identification, e.g. Protocol Assistant - (GR)FSN-9/5.

Contractors who are applying the position classification standards will be briefed fully on the grade retention procedures and related salary conversion principles. Contractors will remain at post for 2 to 3 days after completion of a

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wage/classification survey to explain the above procedures and related survey findings, as considered necessary by the post.

Questions regarding the foregoing policy should be directed to the Department (PER/ER/FN).

VANCE

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